

# COVER SHEET

**Responsible Agency:**

U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), National Nuclear Security Administration

**Title:**

Special Environmental Analysis for the Department of Energy, National Nuclear Security Administration, Actions Taken in Response to the Cerro Grande Fire at Los Alamos National Laboratory, Los Alamos, New Mexico

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**Abstract:**

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), National Nuclear Security Administration, is issuing this special environmental analysis (SEA) to document its assessment of impacts associated with emergency activities conducted at Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL), Los Alamos County, New Mexico, in response to major disaster conditions caused by the recent wildfire known as the Cerro Grande Fire. This wildfire burned about 7,650 acres (ac) (3,061 hectares [ha]) within the boundaries of LANL and about an additional 35,500 ac (14,200 ha) in neighboring areas. As a result of this wildfire event, DOE identified the need to take actions on an emergency basis to protect human life and property. DOE considered that its actions should not just be protective of the lives of its employees, contractors, and subcontractors, but also the lives of all people living and working in the LANL region. DOE also considered that its actions should not just protect property belonging to the U.S. Government, but also the properties of neighboring and downstream landowners and residents. DOE would normally prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) in compliance with the *National Environmental Policy Act of 1969* (NEPA), as amended, to analyze potentially significant beneficial or adverse impacts that could occur if a proposed action(s) was implemented. However, because of the urgent nature of the actions required of DOE to address the effects of the Cerro Grande Fire as it burned over LANL and the need for immediate post-fire recovery and protective actions, DOE had to act immediately. DOE was, therefore, unable to comply with NEPA in the usual manner. DOE thereby invoked the Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ's) emergency circumstances clause of its NEPA Implementing Regulations (40 CFR Part 1506.11) and the emergency circumstances clause of DOE's own NEPA implementing regulations (10 CFR Part 1021.343). This SEA provides the reader with an assessment of the impacts that have resulted because of actions undertaken by DOE (or undertaken on the behalf of DOE by other parties at DOE's direction or with DOE funding) to address a major disaster emergency situation. The SEA includes descriptions of the actions, the resulting impacts from the actions, mitigation measures taken for these actions that render their impacts not significant or that lessen the adverse effect of the actions, and an analysis of cumulative impacts. Unlike an EIS produced in the course of routine NEPA compliance, this SEA does not include an impact assessment of alternative actions that DOE could have taken to meet its purpose and need for action. Nor does it include an assessment of the No-Action Alternative. Furthermore, DOE will not issue a formal record of decision based on this SEA analysis. Actions not included in this SEA analysis will be the subject of other NEPA reviews and analyses.